

Sadly, rather than engage in the normal legislative process that would allow my colleague, the Presiding Officer from Maine, who may have a different view from mine, and others to debate and vote on these issues and make policy so we can be held accountable for what we do, the President has decided to skirt the legislative process and instead rely on unaccountable bureaucrats to enact measures that would never pass through Congress. Yet the idea of this President is: I have a phone and a pen, and I can go it alone. He can do it by himself.

Well, he can't. Our Constitution does not allow that. Sooner or later the American people are going to hold folks accountable for enabling this sort of unilateral activity. In my view this is an unforced error that will damage our economy, hurt our workers, and raise the cost of living for middle-class families and those on a fixed income.

I find it astonishing that this misguided regulation is being considered now when our economy is growing so slowly and so many people are out of work or have left the workforce, and the median household income is down, yet costs for health care, food, gasoline, and other commodities are going up.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHANNIS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF KEITH M. HARPER FOR THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR DURING HIS TENURE OF SERVICE AS UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE TO THE U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Keith M. Harper, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Harper nomination.

Who yields time?

Mr. JOHANNIS. We yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Keith M. Harper, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Elizabeth Warren, Barbara A. Mikulski, Jack Reed, Richard Blumenthal, Carl Levin, Christopher Murphy, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Thomas R. Carper, John D. Rockefeller IV, Jeff Merkley, Richard J. Durbin, Benjamin L. Cardin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on nomination of Keith M. Harper, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), and the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) would have voted "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 164 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Feinstein	Manchin
Begich	Franken	Markey
Bennet	Gillibrand	McCaskill
Blumenthal	Hagan	Merkley
Boxer	Harkin	Mikulski
Brown	Heinrich	Murphy
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Murray
Cardin	Hirono	Nelson
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Pryor
Casey	Kaine	Reed
Collins	King	Reid
Coons	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Donnelly	Landrieu	Sanders
Durbin	Levin	Schatz

Schumer
Shaheen
Stabenow

Tester
Udall (NM)
Warner

Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—37

Alexander
Ayotte
Barrasso
Blunt
Burr
Chambliss
Coats
Coburn
Corker
Cornyn
Crapo
Cruz
Enzi

Fischer
Flake
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heller
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johanns
Johnson (WI)
McCain
McConnell

Moran
Murkowski
Paul
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Scott
Sessions
Shelby
Thune
Wicker

NOT VOTING—12

Booker
Boozman
Cochran
Kirk

Leahy
Lee
Menendez
Rubio
Toomey
Udall (CO)
Vitter
Walsh

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 51, the nays are 37. The motion is agreed.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, what is the order of business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are postcloture on the nomination.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate on a couple of important topics for up to an hour.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I come to the floor tonight heartbroken at the loss of 6 young people and the injuries to 13 more after a devastating gun violence tragedy that occurred on May 23 in the Isla Vista community near Santa Barbara.

As a mother, grandmother, and Senator representing the most unbelievable State in the Union, this latest mass shooting shook me to the core. I was struck by this simple fact: No one is safe in America anymore. No one is safe in America anymore—not in their schools, not in a movie theater, not in their workplace, not in their home, and not on a beautiful college campus overlooking the Pacific Ocean where the victims of this latest horrific attack were busy pursuing their dreams.

I am going to show the faces of the students we lost. Christopher Ross Michaels-Martinez, 20 years old, from Los Osos/Oceano, CA. He was an English major who served as a resident adviser in a campus dorm while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. He was planning to study abroad in London next year, and he dreamed of going to law school like both of his parents. His cousin Jaime described Chris as "smart, gentle, and kind," but with a competitive spirit he showed on the basketball court. His high school basketball coach said, "he was a coach's dream. He was a team player, he had a great attitude and he was a hard worker who would stay after practice and work on his shots." His father Richard said:

Chris was a really good kid. Ask anyone who knew him. His death has left our family lost and broken.

Veronika Elizabeth Weiss, 19, from Thousand Oaks. She loved sports and

high school. She played on four teams. She started playing softball at the age of 6, and later turned to baseball and was the only girl out of 500 players in the Westlake Baseball League. She was a good student who earned straight A's in high school and graduated with a 4.3 GPA. She was majoring in pre-financial mathematics and statistics. Her father said: "She wanted to be a financial wizard, and use her high aptitude with complicated math." She was a member of the Tri-Delta Sorority, just like her mom and grandmother, and now she is gone.

One of her friends said: "Veronika was one of the people you knew you wanted to be friends with. She is willing to become friends with anyone and everyone. She is the one person who can make you smile instantly."

Then there is Katherine "Katie" Breann Cooper, 22, of Chino Hills, CA. She was close to her two brothers, and she was weeks away from graduating with a degree in art history. Her friends remember her as fun and outgoing, someone who had "a very bright smile that lit up a whole room." And we can see the smile.

In the words of one family friend, Katie was the "kind of girl that brought sunshine on an overcast day." She loved soccer and running track and helped her family deliver Christmas gifts to her neighbors in Chino Hills every year.

She was also a member of Tri Delta, a ballroom dance teaching assistant, and raised money for St. Jude's Children's Hospital in Memphis. Her friends said she was "involved in everything" and "never slowed down."

"She was a self-proclaimed princess and I love her for that," her friend Courtney said. "And I know she has a crown on her head today."

Cheng Yuan "James" Hong, 20, San Jose, CA. He was a fourth-year computer engineering major who spent his time volunteering as a teacher assistant at Rainbow Chinese School in Cupertino. He friends described him as a hard-working and bright student who was always willing to help others.

His high school drama teacher in San Jose remembered him as a quiet student who was happy to work backstage to ensure that his classmates could shine.

One of his former classmates said that he was "one of the kindest, most genuine people I have ever met . . . He was never afraid that his unrelenting kindness might have led to him being taken advantage of. He helped out everybody he knew, myself included, and never asked for anything in return. He was good for the sake of being good, and it is incredibly rare to find people that genuine."

Then there is George Chen, 19, from San Jose. He graduated from high school in San Jose and had just finished his second year at UC-Santa Barbara where he studied computer science. His father is a software engineer, and George wanted to follow in

his dad's footsteps. He liked swimming and hiking and was close to his younger brother, who is 10 years old, despite their age difference. They would play video games together and laugh. Friends described George as a "gentle soul" who had a fondness for working with children.

When he went home to visit his parents during breaks from school, his mother said he would always go out of his way to pick up his elderly neighbor's mail and take out their trash. He volunteered for the Buddhist charity group Tzu Chi and as a camp counselor at the YMCA. And he is gone.

Then there is Weihai "David" Wang from Fremont, CA, 20 years old. His mother described her son as "a very, very nice boy," the kind who aced his SATs but never bragged about it. He was an avid basketball fan. He played on his high school team in Fremont, and was a big fan of the Los Angeles Lakers.

At UC-Santa Barbara, he studied computer engineering and wanted to start a business with his friends. One friend described David as "warm-hearted and helpful." His parents said that David was "gentle, kind, loving, joyful, peaceful, faithful, and self-controlled." He was supposed to return home for the summer break soon to go on a trip with his family to Yellowstone National Park.

I say to all families who can hear me: Imagine what that does to a mother and father—to a family. David was their only child. His mother said, "He was always the joy of the family," and now he is gone.

These were all bright and talented people who were full of promise and passion. Their dreams and futures were extinguished in an instant of chaos.

Today I join their families, friends, and classmates in mourning their unfathomable loss. Not only that, I stand with them in staunch determination to do everything in my power to stop this senseless violence.

Richard Martinez, the dad of Christopher, said it best. He said he does not want or care about sympathy from politicians. He said to us: "Get to work and do something."

The parents of James Hong said the same thing in a letter: "I know there has been a great injustice, and policy can be improved." They added that their son "can't be here to help anymore, but you can."

The mother of George Chen said: "This is not the first time it happens, a killing spree, but I hope it's the last one. No parent should have to go through this."

And the parents of David Wang wrote: "It's time to stop gun violence, and be free from fear." They are absolutely right. We must act. We cannot sit back and simply accept that nearly 90 Americans are killed every day—and 30,000 are killed every year—from gun violence.

I well remember the Vietnam War because I got involved in politics to try

and stop it. It was horrible. We lost more than 50,000 people over 10 years, and we ended that war.

Mr. President, 30,000 are killed every year from gun violence. When are we going to end the war here at home? We cannot accept that every day an average of 8 children and teens under the age of 20 are killed by guns. We cannot accept the fact that children in the United States die by guns 11 times as often as children in other high-income nations. It is an outrage, and it has to end.

We often see the same reaction after mass shootings like this. Some will insist it was just "the act of a mad man" and there is nothing you can do to stop a deranged person from going on a rampage. You know what? History says that defeatist attitude is wrong.

Take Australia. In April 1996, a young man killed 35 people and wounded 23 others with a semiautomatic rifle in the so-called Port Arthur massacre, the worst mass shooting in Australian history.

Less than 2 weeks later, the conservative-led national government pushed through fundamental changes to the country's gun laws. Australia's conservative government passed laws that all but prohibited automatic and semiautomatic assault rifles, stiffened licensing and ownership rules, and instituted a temporary gun buyback program that took some 650,000 assault weapons out of public circulation. The law then required licensees to demonstrate a "genuine need" for a particular type of gun and take a firearm safety course. Those actions by Australia's leaders made a difference. In the decade before Port Arthur, Australia saw 11 mass shootings. Since then, there has not been a single mass shooting, and the gun murder rate has continued to steadily decline.

In 2011, Australia had 0.86 gun deaths for each 100,000 people—or 25 people. That year the United States had 10.3 gun deaths per 100,000 people, or 11,101 Americans. Accounting for the population differences, this is insanity.

Australia said enough is enough. When are we going to do that?

Canadians said enough is enough. In December 1989, a disgruntled student walked into a Montreal engineering school with a semiautomatic and killed 14 students and injured over a dozen others. That tragedy prompted the leaders in Canada to ban more than half of all registered guns, require all gun owners to be at least 18, and obtain a license. You need a license for a car. Why don't you need a license, public safety course, and a background check for a gun? That is what they did.

Canadians said enough is enough, and it paid off. Canada's gun murder rate has declined since passage of these laws, with occasional spikes in gun violence.

In 2009, Canada had 0.5 deaths per 100,000 from gun murders—173 people. The United States had 3 gun murders for every 100,000 that year—that is

11,493 Americans. Come on—173 out of 100,000 compared to 11,493 people out of 100,000? What is wrong with the people here in this country and in this body?

The United Kingdom experienced tragedies that led their leaders to act. In August of 1987, a lone gunman armed with two legally-owned semi-automatic rifles and a handgun went on a 6-hour shooting spree roughly 70 miles west of London, killing 16 people and then himself. Britain expanded the list of banned weapons, including certain semi-automatic rifles. They increased registration requirements for other weapons. Since then, they have banned all handguns, with a few exceptions. The government instituted a buyback program which many credit for taking tens of thousands of illegal or unwanted guns out of supply. Their actions paid off. The UK's gun murder rate since passage of these laws is now less than half of what it used to be.

In 2011 the UK had 0.23 gun deaths per 100,000 people, a fraction of the 10.3 gun deaths per 100,000 in the United States that year. They had 38 gun murders; we had 11,101. What is going on? We have to do some of this here. What are we so scared of?

I said when I started this speech that no one is safe in America because we don't take commonsense steps. I am not saying we ban guns or we ban people from having guns—no—but that we have a system where they have to show they need it. We can do the same things here in America. We can start. How about this: Pass measures that have nearly unanimous support among the American people, wherever they live in our great Nation. Take background checks. Ninety percent of Americans say they support background checks. Because one gun lobby doesn't like it, we turn our backs on 90 percent of the people. What is wrong with us?

We have legislation to expand background checks. It has bipartisan support. We should take it up and pass it and do the work of the people, 90 percent of whom want us to pass background checks.

Assault weapons. Most Americans support banning military-style assault weapons: 81 percent of voters, 71 percent of gun owners, and 60 percent of NRA members. We should pass Senator FEINSTEIN's legislation now and do the work the American people want us to do.

How about high-capacity magazine clips? Seventy-two percent of voters say we should ban the sale of high-capacity ammunition magazines.

Mental health. Lawmakers on both sides support taking action. Let's do it now.

School safety. I authored a bill with Senator COLLINS to provide the resources needed to make schools safer. Take it up and pass it, and don't load it up with controversy. Pass the things we need to pass. Do it for these families and for God knows all the others who are suffering and crying them-

selves to sleep every single night, bearing a loss that will never go away.

Here is the situation. In this particular case, we had the family of the gunman who committed the massacre call the police and say: We are very worried about our son. It is haunting to me that they had a feeling about it and they called the police. The police went to interview this troubled young man, and they couldn't see through his problems. They didn't check the gun database we have in California. If they had, they would have seen that he had purchased guns. If they knew that, we would have been in a different circumstance.

So we are introducing legislation called the Pause for Safety Act. This is what it does. No. 1, families and others who are very close to the suspected unstable individual can go to court and seek a gun violence prevention order to temporarily stop someone who poses a danger to themselves or others from purchasing a firearm. They can go to court and seek a gun violence prevention order. Let's say it is a group of co-workers who see that this person is threatening or he has written something. They can actually make the case before a judge and get an order, so the person cannot buy guns.

No. 2, it would help ensure that families and others close to the individual can also seek a gun violence prevention warrant which would allow law enforcement to take temporary possession of firearms that already have been purchased. If those police officers had known this individual had bought those weapons—because we do have that database—they could have gone and gotten the warrant. But under our bill, a family member could do this. They could go to court and seek that gun violence prevention warrant.

No. 3, if law enforcement gets a tip or a warning or a request from a family member, they can then make full use of a gun registry if it exists in their state. It is very important for law enforcement to make use of the gun registry if it exists.

I am very pleased that similar legislation has been introduced in California by Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner, Assemblyman Das Williams, as well as State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson.

We all remember the shock and outrage we felt after the Sandy Hook shooting in Newtown, CT, where a gunman shot 20—babies, I call them—children—schoolchildren and 6 adult staff members. All of those lives lost, and we said we would take action. We wore ribbons and we came to the floor and we cried. Well, since that shooting, more than 28,000 Americans have died from gun violence—90 people every day. Imagine, if it was anything else that caused the death of 28,000 Americans, we would be on the Senate floor.

The shooting at Sandy Hook and the shooting at UC Santa Barbara are a reminder that we have failed our children. Call it what you want. We are

failing our children. We have a basic task to keep our children safe. They look to us, and they believe we will protect them. We have a function here, which is to not allow someone who is unstable and violent to get a weapon. So we need to pull together, and we need to show our children we love them, not by making fancy speeches but by doing the right thing, such as this father said we have to do, Chris's dad. Don't tell me how you love children; don't talk to me about how bad you feel. Do something.

Children need to know they are safe in school. People need to know they are safe at work. People need to feel safe in a restaurant—anyplace. Let us honor these victims of gun violence by working to end this epidemic. We look at these faces, we look at their eyes, and we know they were just at the start of their adventures, at the height of their productivity, in their twenties.

We have to do something so this doesn't happen again and again and again.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, in this work we do so many issues need to be discussed. One of them I have tried to discuss, along with several colleagues, is this incredible threat to our planet caused by climate change. I have participated with my colleagues, Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator MARKEY, Senator CARDIN, and many others, in all-night speeches and in hearings.

I am so proud to be the chairman of the environment committee. It was many years ago when I took the gavel to become the chairman that I started to really get involved in the details and in the science and in the predictions of scientists as to what could happen. We came very close to doing something important here in the Senate, but we faced a filibuster, and although the House passed a very important bill years ago, we couldn't get it done. We fell six votes short.

At the time, the press said to me: What are you going to do? Are you going to do nothing about this? No, I said. Actually, the most popular law that has ever been passed—I believe it; I haven't taken a poll on it, but I can tell my colleagues from looking at studies that the Clean Air Act covers all kinds of pollution, including carbon pollution. I said that even though we weren't able to have a cap-and-trade system which would put a price on carbon and let people get permits and trade them, I felt that was a good way to work in a capitalistic society, and we didn't go there. I said we have the Clean Air Act. Once an endangerment finding is made—it was started during the Bush administration and completed during the Obama administration—we know the President has full authority to act, with or without the deniers here in the Senate and in the House.

Now, 40 percent of all the carbon is emitted by powerplants, so powerplants are a very important part of the

problem we have to address. We already know the President and the Congress worked together to reduce the pollution coming out of our cars by passing very important fuel economy measures. But this is really the largest problem—those powerplants and the dangerous carbon.

The President understands and looks at his kids and he knows if they are going to have a world in which they can thrive, we have to do something about this problem, and we can't just put our heads in the sand and say the scientists are wrong. Let's not be like the deniers who said smoking didn't cause cancer. Ninety-seven percent of scientists said it did; 3 percent said it didn't. The tobacco lobby went on the side of the bad guys and, for years, we had to fight and prod and push. Guess what happened? People got sick and a lot of them died because there was basically a coverup by the tobacco industry.

We are facing a similar situation. The big special interests are trying to tell the American people: Don't worry about this climate change. It is no big deal. Well, here is the great news: The President has stepped forward. He has taken on carbon pollution from powerplants.

Under current law there is no limit to the amount of carbon pollution that can be released into the air from powerplants. The President's carbon pollution reduction plan is going to change all that. It will protect public health. It will save thousands of lives. It will avoid up to 6,600 premature deaths, 150,000 asthma attacks, 3,300 heart attacks, 2,800 hospital admissions, and 490,000 missed days at school and work will be prevented. Those benefits will kick in.

Here is what is important about that. When we clean up the carbon, we protect the air quality. That is why the President went to a hospital when he announced this. That is why 70 percent of the people—including, as I recall, a huge majority of Americans—support regulating carbon from powerplants and they are even willing to pay for it. A lopsided and bipartisan majority of Americans support Federal limits on greenhouse gas emissions according to this new poll. Fully 70 percent say the Federal Government should require limits to greenhouse gases from existing plants. What is so interesting: 57 percent of Republicans support it, 76 percent of Independents, and 79 percent of Democrats. So this is a plan whose time has come.

This plan will also create tens of thousands of jobs as we move to a clean energy economy. By reducing carbon pollution, we can avert the most calamitous impacts of climate change, such as rising sea levels, dangerous heat waves, and economic disruption. If we do not act, we could see a 10-degree Fahrenheit rise in temperature, and that is disastrous, really, for all of our States.

I have been so privileged to work on the Senate Climate Action Task Force.

What is interesting is that I have listened to people from all over the country talk about what this climate change means in their States. Coastal States have a certain set of problems, inland States, agricultural States, and there are the forest fires that are burning out of control. I hope people will watch the documentary "Years of Living Dangerously." It is really a wake-up call if you have not already awakened to this problem. It is happening all over the world—fires that do not stop, droughts that the Defense Department is telling us are a real problem.

Do you know how the House of Representatives deals with climate change? They pass a bill that says the Defense Department cannot act on what they have already said, which is that climate change is a real, serious threat multiplier. They actually said now it could be a cause of conflict. Before they said it was a threat multiplier. Now they say it is actually a—they use the word "catalyst" for conflict. But the House does not like that, so they just said: It shall be so. We will not talk about this anymore. Stamp my foot—no. Disregard 97 percent of the scientists.

Here is the thing I like about the President's proposal: It is respectful of States' roles. It allows major flexibility. Every State is going to have its own plan. Some States may say: Coal-fired plants, you can clean up a little bit. We will get a little savings there. But we will also do some energy efficiency so you do not have to burn as much coal. This is what is envisioned.

Eventually, we are going to see lower prices for our folks. They say in about 15 years we are going to see an 8-percent decrease. Let me say that again. It is going to shrink electricity bills roughly 8 percent, and that is going to happen because we are going to have increased energy efficiency and reduced demand.

So this poll is very clear. People want action. And the Clean Air Act is very clear.

I think it is important to note that under George Bush we wasted 8 years because they kept saying carbon pollution was not covered in the Clean Air Act. But we had some very smart attorneys who went up there—and one of them is sitting here—who said: No, no, no. Just read it. If you read it, you will see.

Thank goodness the Supreme Court ruled and said that absolutely greenhouse gas emissions can be regulated if there is an endangerment finding. And there certainly was that. So the Clean Air Act has a proven track record.

I will close with this. To those people who are in denial, I say: Wake up because it is not about you; it is about your kids and your grandkids and their kids. So get out of that phase because you are hurting people—innocent people. This is your time to do something—not to walk away.

For those people who say: Oh, the environment, that is not an important

issue to the people—no. It is a big deal. Every time my friends here try to repeal parts of the Clean Air Act, I come to the floor with colleagues. We have stopped them. The House voted 90 times with these terrible riders. We have stopped them every time. Eighty percent of the people support the Clean Air Act. We have to protect our families.

We have seen a country that has thrown the environment under the bus. Now they say they are changing, but let's see what a country looks like—instead of listening to my words, let's look at a photo. As shown in this picture, this is what life is like in some Chinese provinces. They do not care about the environment. They do what some of my friends say: Oh, repeal this—they do not even have these laws to repeal. They do not care. Just develop, just develop, just develop. Do not pay attention. Do not worry about best technologies. Just throw the environment under the bus.

Well, guess what. These people are being thrown under the bus. They cannot breathe. And if you cannot breathe, you cannot work. So even China—they are learning they have to do something to clean up their environment.

But we cannot look like this in the future. I am just telling you. People think, oh, an exaggeration. I had one of my Republican colleagues walk out on me in a hearing because I showed this picture. They said: We do not want this.

I am not saying they want it. I am saying that if you repeal all the provisions of the Clean Air Act that they are trying to repeal—and they want, by the way, to stop us from this rule—that is what is going to happen, not that they want it to happen. Of course they do not want it to happen. They do not think it is going to happen. But this has happened because in China, like us, they have a very big economy, and they are expanding. We want to expand, but we have to do it in a clean way.

So the people of my home State of California get this. They get this. The oil companies came in and they put millions of dollars to try to get us to repeal our cap-and-trade system and our rules and our laws. People said: No, no, no, we are not going there with you, Big Oil. Clean up your act.

My mother used to say: Clean up your room. The room they are polluting belongs to everybody. It is the atmosphere. We all have to clean it up. This is not something we take a pass on. This is the planet Earth itself. Somebody said the other day—some scientist—that the Earth will survive. It will look a lot different. The water will be different. This will be different. There will not be the same things growing and forests will be elsewhere. But what about the people? Well, that was not a good story.

It is up to us. We have a lot on our shoulders. We really do. I am not saying it is easy. Nothing is easy. My dad

used to say: Nothing good comes easy. It is true. We have to try to figure it out.

But I want to say to this President tonight how proud I am that he has stepped up to the plate. All the screaming and the denials and the yelling and the rest and the special interests, which my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE says has a barricade of lies around the Capitol—and he is just looking at his daughters and he is looking at all the young people he meets, and he is saying: You know what, I have to do something. And he is looking at the military. He is looking at them and he is thinking: I am being told—he is saying—by the Department of Defense that climate change is making this an unstable world.

Actually, there is a very strong case to be made that was made in a documentary that a lot of the cause of the Syrian war started out with the farmers rebelling and revolting because they cannot deal with what is happening to their lives—the farmers.

So whether it is climate change or taking care of our veterans or all the other things facing us—the violence—we have a lot on our plate. I just hope we can step up to the plate, with the best of intentions, work across party lines, do our best, stop playing politics. President Obama says one thing. It does not matter what he says, the other side is all over it. How could that be? How could every single thing a person says be controversial? Sometimes I think if the President said “Good morning,” one of the Republicans would say “It is not; how dare you say it is a good morning?” That is what it is getting to. We have to put that aside. We are only here for a short amount of time, and we have to do our best to solve the problems the American people face.

So I took a long time tonight because I feel there are so many things out there that I am so privileged to be able to talk about and, more important, I can do something about. So I hope our colleagues will come together on these topics and we can make some progress for the good of the American people.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY POLICY

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to offer my strong support of the Environmental Protection Agency’s clean power plan to cut carbon pollution from existing powerplants. The EPA’s proposal is a powerful step in the fight to protect our health and our environment.

We face a crisis. We know that high carbon dioxide levels in our atmos-

phere are driving climate change. We know these carbon dioxide levels are increasing the acidity of our oceans, disrupting already fragile marine ecosystems. We know that powerplants are responsible for about 40 percent of America’s carbon pollution.

Add all that up and we have enough to know that reducing carbon pollution from powerplant emissions will make a real difference in the fight against climate change. Pollution from powerplants is also associated with other dangerous chemicals.

A study led by the University of Syracuse and Harvard University found that reducing carbon dioxide emissions from powerplants can also reduce emissions of other pollutants such as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and mercury.

These dangerous chemicals contribute to acid rain, the destruction of ecosystems, ozone damage to trees and crops, and mercury in fish. These dangerous chemicals are also a direct threat to our health, increasing the risk of heart attacks, asthma, and even death. Add all that up and we have enough to know that reducing powerplant emissions will make a real difference in the health of our children, our parents, and ourselves.

Scientists all around the world have collected mountains of evidence about the dangers of carbon pollution. Their basic conclusions are no longer speculative or debatable. Even so, some politicians respond to this evidence by denying it is true, by rejecting scientific evidence or by claiming they just cannot understand the science.

This country was not built by people who ignored facts. Sure, the deniers can defend their friends in the pollution business, they can rail against science or pretend it does not exist, but the facts are catching up with us. This pollution is killing people across this country. According to the American Lung Association, up to 100,000 asthma attacks and 4,000 premature deaths will be avoided in the first year the clean power plan goes into effect.

Let the deniers deny the facts, but do not let them deny our children clean air to breathe or deny our parents long and healthy lives. The EPA’s draft proposal based on its authority under the Clean Air Act is a commonsense approach that builds on work already underway in States and cities across the country. Under the proposal, States will work with the EPA to reduce carbon pollution, and they can use a variety of tools to do it. The clean power plan encourages States to be creative and efficient, to partner with private industry to give our children a safer, healthier world.

In Massachusetts, we have seen how effective those solutions can be, after passing laws to increase energy efficiency and encourage renewable energy production. The Commonwealth joined neighboring States as part of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. We called it RGGI, and since 2005 RGGI has

helped member States cut carbon emissions by 40 percent.

RGGI has shown results and it has done so with bipartisan support and the backing of many members of the business community, members who understand that taking action against pollution is not only good for our public health and our environment, it is also good for business.

The fight against carbon pollution is about protecting our health, protecting our communities, and protecting our future. But make no mistake, this fight is also about whether this country works only for big energy companies or whether it works for everyone else too.

The terrible consequences of failing to act are real. We cannot afford to wait. But every time rules are proposed to clean up our air and water or to protect our environment, powerful deep-pocketed corporations line up to fight these changes. These opponents and their Republican friends are already attacking the EPA’s proposed changes. Their latest move is to argue that the EPA’s efforts somehow are not legal. That argument is laughable. Seven years ago, my State of Massachusetts led a multistate fight that went all the way to the Supreme Court to force the EPA to do its job to address carbon pollution in this country. We won that case and we started the process that resulted in the Supreme Court ruling that the EPA has the authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act.

Instead of embracing change, instead of working to develop rules to reduce pollution and protect the air we breathe, some companies and their Republican friends have fought change at every step. They loudly defend a world where polluters cut their costs by spewing dangerous chemicals and greenhouse gases into our air and water, leaving everyone else to deal with the consequences of their pollution.

They loudly defend a world where giant oil companies suck down billions of dollars in subsidies every year, while the green energy industries of the future fight for every scrap of support. They quietly work to tilt the playing field against the technologies of the future so that clean energy entrepreneurs and innovators have a harder time succeeding, while dirty energy companies keep raking in the profits.

Climate change is real. More than 120 million Americans live in counties that border the shoreline and a rising sea that threatens their homes and their communities. Millions more live in the path of wildfires or will be caught in the drought that will devastate our land. But unlike big energy companies, they do not have armies of lobbyists and lawyers to protect their interests. They see Washington ignore those problems and they see a system that is rigged against them. These millions of Americans have only their voices, and they call on us to fight for them, to

fight for meaningful action to address climate change.

The EPA's new clean power plan is one part of the solution. We must build on this proposal and continue our efforts to cut carbon pollution, to improve energy efficiency, and to invest in building a clean energy economy.

I applaud President Obama and EPA Administrator McCarthy for their leadership in stepping up and pushing for meaningful standards, and I expect that a strong final rule will be implemented next year because no matter the opposition, no matter how powerful those industries that would let our forests burn, let our crops dry up, let our children get sick, and let our cities drown just to protect their own profits, we have no choice but to take real action to fight climate change. The simple truth is that our future depends on it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL MATTHEW B. RYTTHING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and thank Lt. Col. Matthew Rytting for over two decades of service in the U.S. Air Force. Colonel Rytting will be retiring on June 13, 2014, and I am grateful for his service and dedication to our Nation.

Colonel Rytting's career with the U.S. Air Force has been diverse and impressive, and it has included service as a combat control team officer, an F-15C fighter pilot, an F-4 instructor pilot, a chief of flight safety, a Civil Air Patrol commander, an Air Force One advance agent responsible for logistical and security support for Presidential travel, and most recently as a UV-18B instructor pilot, director of operations and cofounder of the Wings of Blue Association at the U.S. Air Force Academy. Within just a few years of his graduation from the Air Force Academy, while serving as a combat control team officer and squadron commander during Haiti's "Uphold Democracy," he led a special operations team in providing communications and air traffic control in non-permissive environments, specializing in parachute insertion techniques. Shortly thereafter, he won accolades as

the top Air Force graduate in undergraduate pilot training at Columbus Air Force Base in Mississippi. His many accomplishments since then include Distinguished Graduate of the Air Force's Squadron Officer School, Top-Wingman Awards in Singapore and Alaska as an F-15C Pilot, a Chief of Staff of the Air Force Safety Award in May 2007, Outstanding Graduate in the top 1 percent of his class from the U.S. Air Force Air War College, a Civil Air Pilot Meritorious Service Award, and a Big Brothers Big Sisters Big Brother of the Year Award in Fairbanks, AK.

Colonel Rytting's many accomplishments serve as a representation of his strong sense of duty and commitment to our great Nation. I am particularly impressed by Colonel Rytting's commitment to enhancing the capabilities of our Nation's airmen, both through investigating catastrophic aircraft mishaps in order to prevent future losses and through devoting years of service to the instruction of students and airmen in employing their aircraft and supporting joint, coalition and multinational forces. As recently as 2013, as a safety officer and a BD-700 instructor pilot in Afghanistan, Colonel Rytting trained pilots on how to provide the needed airborne communication bridges to ground forces entrenched in enemy areas, ultimately saving American lives. He also instructed German Luftwaffe students in F-4 basic flight and air-to-air combat at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico, led successful safety programs for 250 aircrew at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska, established a facility to train combat aircrews in advanced techniques at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska, and directed 19,000 skydives and 2,400 accident-free flight hours annually for the U.S. Air Force's parachute team Wings of Blue. Throughout his time in the Air Force, Colonel Rytting set a wonderful example for his family and for the men and women who served with him in the Air Force. His commitment to the United States and his leadership within the Air Force is truly commendable.

Colonel Rytting was proud to serve our country, and today I am proud to thank Colonel Rytting for his service to this Nation. I congratulate him on his well-earned retirement.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request at the present time relating to the nomination of Nani Coloretti to be Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

I have been conducting an inquiry regarding allegations of questionable hiring practices at the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, FinCEN. As part of that inquiry, I have requested documents from the Treasury Department that could resolve my concerns and questions. I encourage the administration to provide those documents to me as soon as possible.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MAHASKA COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Mahaska County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Mahaska County worth over \$1.2 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$64 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memory of working together has to be working with people like Deb Philpot, executive director of the South Central Iowa Center for Independent Living, who helps to promote independent living for people with disabilities. There is no substitute for being able to live at home, close to your friends and family, and not in an institutional setting. I look forward to hearing about the kind of progress that has been made in Oskaloosa.

Among the highlights:

Disability rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in